

Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Secretariat

10 Mar 88

D/PAO WMS

Bill W

Sharon Smf

*considerate of Jim to
forward - good
read.*

Attached FYI - please return to me.

(thought you may want to read and

STAT cleared with DDI)



ER file

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

THE NID AND THE NEWSPAPERS: MEETING THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

STAT

FROM:

Chief, Product Evaluation Staff

EXTENSION

NO.

2G25 Hqs. ~~DDI~~ 00849 88

DATE

4 March 1988

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

09 MAR 1988

DATE

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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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30f - some time ago I asked PES to do a fuck review of the NID and three newspapers. Purpose was to see how they differed, what we might learn etc. This is result. Interesting.

It is interesting



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THE NID AND THE NEWSPAPERS: MEETING THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

DDI #00849-88
Product Evaluation Staff
March 1988

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THE NID AND THE NEWSPAPERS: MEETING THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

Summary

The National Intelligence Daily and the major daily newspapers in many respects have similar goals in reporting on foreign affairs developments in an accurate and timely fashion, but also have significant differences in format and mission. Like it or not, the availability of and familiarity with these papers often lead consumers to compare the NID with the press in terms of coverage, quality and timeliness.

Our comparison of the NID and three major newspapers--The Washington Post, The New York Times, and The Christian Science Monitor, showed that the NID and the press each have some strengths and weaknesses. In general we found that the press:

- Benefits from having reporters on the scene who can provide as much information as US embassies and sometimes have better access to opposition and other non-government sources.
- Has the edge in readability because of space, format and writing style.
- Can often provide valuable details and atmospherics.

On the other hand the NID is better able to:

- Cover topics that draw heavily on technical intelligence--such as Soviet weapons development and tactical military situations.
- Cover stories that involve more than one country or cut across geographic regions, or require collating material from numerous areas on topics such as narcotics, terrorism, or international arms trade.
- Provide readers with insights not usually available elsewhere on diplomatic initiatives.

The most significant competition appears in the reporting and analysis of a country's internal political developments, especially where the press has a resident correspondent. The newspapers generally can respond in timely fashion to include bringing in additional reporters, and can devote more space to important developments. NID articles often contain unique information from clandestine or other sources, but this information can be buried away from the lead.

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Recognizing that the NID is only one genre of intelligence production and that it serves many purposes well, we believe its usefulness could be strengthened:

- Consideration should be given to distributing occasional NID supplements to provide customers additional information and analysis. These supplements would reach a wider audience than typescript memoranda and could include wall charts and biographic reports.
- DI managers at all levels need to reemphasize the need for timely analysis of important developments and the highlighting of unique intelligence information in NID items.
- We should encourage analysts to continue to use opposite page charts and other graphics to convey additional information.

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